

**Visit by General Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong, Co-Chairman, U.S.-Russia Joint
Commission on POW/MIAs to Moscow, Russian Federation,
September 25-29, 2006**

**Meeting with General-Lieutenant Vladimir Shamanov
Tolstoy Conference Room, Metropol Hotel
Tuesday, September 26, 2006, 9:45-11:15 AM**

Representing the U.S. Side:

General Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong
Mr. Norman Kass
LTC Michael O'Hara
LtCol Timothy Hall
Mr. Henry Eastman

Representing the Russian Side:

General-Lieutenant Vladimir Anatol'evich Shamanov
General-Major Aleksandr Valentinovich Kirilin
Colonel Andrei Leonidovich Taranov

Attending as the Commission's Cold War Working Group's Representative:

RADM Boris Gavrilovich Novyy

Summary of Discussion

After a brief exchange of amenities, General Foglesong pointed out that the humanitarian nature of the Commission is a theme which resonates with both our governments and nations, whatever be the differences that arise from time to time over specific national policies. As military professionals, the general opined that both he and General Shamanov intuitively appreciate the value of the Commission and its commitment to those who serve and their families. Turning to his assessment of the Commission's recent state of activity, Foglesong observed that, for the past two and a half years, it appears to have been largely inert. It is with the objective of providing the Commission with new focus and momentum that President Bush designated him as the U.S. Chairman, he remarked. He then expressed the hope that, working in partnership with General Shamanov, he will be able to generate the spark required to lift the Commission from its current state of passivity and allow it to regain the stature befitting a Presidential initiative by our two great nations. With that in mind, the U.S. Chairman firmly asserted his view that the Commission should be maintained at the Presidential level. Recognizing that many current issues lay claim to our two Presidents and their schedules, Foglesong invited his counterpart to provide his thoughts on how the Commission may be assured of the Presidential attention and involvement it deserves.

After thanking General Foglesong for his remarks, General Shamanov went on to express appreciation for past U.S. support, citing President Bush's congratulatory remarks on the 60th anniversary of the end of WWII; the Commission's help in resolving the fates of hundreds of thousands of displaced Soviet soldiers from WWII, efforts to clarify Soviet losses during the Korean War, and the generous donation of DNA kits to help Russian forensic specialists account for servicemen still missing from more recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Chechnya. Turning to the Commission's current circumstances, Shamanov cited administrative reforms in the Russian government as the reason for the decline in the Russian side's level of effort over the past two to three years. These reforms, he noted, are now complete. As far as the status of the Commission is concerned, Shamanov acknowledged that, on the Russian side, the Commission has indeed been transferred to the "interagency" level and, as a result, its stature is diminished. As if to soften the impact of his comment, he went on to note that it was President Putin who appointed him in April of 2005 and that Putin recently confirmed to him his interest in and support for the Commission's work. The Russian Chairman pointed out that the Presidential administration is now in the process of reviewing for release two documents affecting the Commission's status and viability: a listing of the Russian membership and a set of by-laws setting out functions and scope of effort. He also requested that all matters relating to the Commission be handled through the Ministry of Defense's Directorate for External Relations.

In response, General Foglesong observed that downgrading the Commission's work to the level of the Ministry of Defense could send a signal that the importance of its mission has been reduced. On the U.S. side, the Commission remains a Presidential-level endeavor and hence enjoys a degree of access and recognition that would otherwise not be attainable. An "interdepartmental structure" would require considerable bureaucratic involvement, with the attendant likelihood of delays and other inefficiencies. There is also the matter of parity. If the American Chairman is working at the Presidential level, it would be helpful if the Russian Chairman, General Shamanov, were also at that level. Foglesong also noted that he had discussed the Commission's work with U.S. congressional contacts and other members of the U.S. side. All of them had expressed their eagerness to resume working with their Russian counterparts. He cited the importance of the list of Russian members and by-laws to which Shamanov referred. In the interim, the U.S. side will continue assisting in the accounting process, as it has done throughout the Commission's tenure. In this content, Foglesong noted that he planned to meet with representatives of Russian veterans' service organizations and invited Shamanov to join him

Shamanov commented that he shares Foglesong's concerns about bureaucracy and stated that his predecessors had an easier job because they were within the Presidential Administration. While he believes that the Commission can function effectively in its current configuration, he assured Foglesong that the latter's desire to restore the Russian side to the Presidential level will be reflected in his report of the meeting. In turn, the U.S. Chairman indicated that he will provide a full report of his visit to President Bush and to the senators and congressmen on the U.S. side.

Focusing on specific topics in need of attention, Foglesong inquired about the status of efforts to secure proper authorization for RADM Novyy to resume his work in Russian archives. Shamanov responded that the matter was being pursued. Next, Foglesong turned to the matter of SSG Marvin J. Steinfeld, believed to have been buried together with Soviet military personnel in a cemetery in Hungary during WWII. Unaware of all that occurred to date in attempting to resolve this case, Shamanov agreed to intercede and requested that relevant documentation be sent to him.

General Foglesong then asked Mr. Kass to discuss the information the U.S. side had acquired with regard to missing Russian personnel from the war in Afghanistan and military operations in Chechnya. Kass emphasized that the U.S. side takes the bilateral nature of the Commission seriously. Whenever information on missing Russian servicemen is located, it will be passed to the Russian side, as has been our practice throughout. He then provided Shamanov with a composite listing of Soviet missing in action/killed in action during the Korean War. Most of the information was taken from the archives of the Russian Ministry of Defense. Kass explained that years ago, when General-Colonel Dmitrii Volkogonov was the Commission's co-chairman, the U.S. side passed along all available information on Soviet soldiers unaccounted-for from the war in Afghanistan. Kass then passed to Shamanov a synopsis of all the information the U.S. side possesses concerning the prisoner uprising in Badkhib on April 27, 1985.

Kass stated that the U.S. side has an ongoing program in which U.S. forces operating in Afghanistan and Iraq routinely provide to the U.S. side of the Commission whatever records they may discover concerning Russian and Soviet-era soldiers. As a result, the U.S. side received an eyewitness report on the downing of a Soviet helicopter and then re-interviewed the source to resolve a number of discrepancies contained in his initial report. Kass provided to the Russian Chairman a copy of the report, including a schematic of the crash site. He also passed along to General Shamanov two videos of poor quality and gruesome, but depicting events that took place in Chechnya. Interspersed in the propaganda footage were scenes of combat, showing the faces of dead soldiers. While unpleasant to watch, Kass noted that the videos may contain data that will prove helpful in identifying those still missing and are provided with that in mind. Shamanov thanked the U.S. side for its efforts.

In his closing comments, General Foglesong stated that he and General Shamanov have been given a noble mission and a very specific responsibility. The journey ahead, he posited, will be long and will require persistent effort if that responsibility is to be carried out properly. He asked General Shamanov to join with him on that journey. Both chairmen assured each other that they will brief their Presidents in detail about their meeting and pledged to commit their efforts to go beyond what Foglesong called the "way point" of the past two-and-a-half years.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Meeting with Messrs. Andrei Denisov and Vladimir Vinokurov
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
September 27, 2006

Representing the U.S. Side:

General Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong
Mr. Daniel Russell
Mr. Norman Kass
LTC Michael O'Hara
LtCol Timothy Hall
Mr. Anthony Kolankiewicz
Mr. Alden Greene
Mr. Henry Eastman

Representing the Russian Side:

Mr. Andrei Ivanovich Denisov
Mr. Vladimir Nikolaevich Vinokurov
Mr. Aleksandr Konstantinovich Zakharov
Mr. Andrei Andreevich Tarelin
General-Major Aleksandr Valentinovich Kirilin
Colonel Andrei Leonidovich Taranov

Summary of Discussion

Mr. Andrei Denisov, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, made a brief appearance at the beginning of the meeting as a show of high-level MFA support for the work of the Joint Commission. He offered the assistance of his ministry in assuring that the Joint Commission proceeds with its humanitarian efforts and then turned the meeting over to Mr. Vladimir Vinokurov, Deputy Director of the North America Department.

Mr. Vinokurov welcomed General Foglesong and introduced himself as substituting for Mr. Igor Neverov, head of the MFA's North America Department, who was at a session of the UN General Assembly. Mr. Vinokurov stressed the importance of the work of the Joint Commission, noting the impressive results that have come from such a modest investment of effort. Expressing regret over the delays that have surfaced on the Russian side, he observed that the Commission's work has had the salutary effect of promoting increased understanding and goodwill between our two countries. In this context, Vinokurov cited recent media coverage of the memorial to Soviet pilots which U.S. forces now at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan have taken upon themselves to restore. He concluded his comments by noting the Russian side's commitment to a

speedy resolution of unresolved issues and welcomed any initiatives that would ensure that the Commission's work regains its former momentum.

Mr. Vinokurov was followed by General Kirilin, who explained that the Russian side's main problem in supporting the Joint Commission's work stems from the absence of a document establishing a legal basis for its existence. This, he said, is due to the fact that the Commission is based on an oral agreement between former Presidents George H.W. Bush and Boris Yeltsin. Kirilin acknowledged with appreciation the Commission's past successes, including the receipt of data from the U.S. side that allowed the Russian government to clarify the fates of some 400,000 persons missing from World War Two. In the period leading up to the issuance of an enabling document that will give the Commission its legal footing, Kirilin stated that the Russian side is ready to continue working under General Shamanov's Interagency Commission. He also pledged continued assistance with U.S. efforts to secure reliable and continuous archival access. Kirilin informed Foglesong that, beginning on December 1, 2006, a special group, akin to JCSD's Moscow office, will be established in the Military Memorial Center to facilitate U.S. research initiatives. On a more specific level, Kirilin indicated the Russian side's readiness to help in resolving the lingering case of Staff Sergeant Marvin J. Steinfeld; undertook to ensure that the Joint Commission would function at least as well as it did under the former Russian Chairman, General Vladimir Zolotarev, and spoke of efforts to retain previous Russian Commission members and hire staff with past experience in the Commission's work.

As part of the discussion, Vinokurov suggested that the U.S. side formally submit a written endorsement of the Joint Commission, which could serve as a starting point for preparing the documentation to which Kirilin referred.

General Foglesong thanked Vinokurov and remarked that Moscow has changed dramatically since his last visit six or seven years ago. He observed that the city is alive with an increased energy level. Foglesong pointed out that President Bush appointed him as Chairman of the U.S. side in order to re-energize the Joint Commission; that the President believes the Joint Commission must remain at the Presidential level, and that the primary purpose for his visit is to report to President Bush on a strategy to advance the Commission's noble objectives.

There is a perception, the general noted, that the Russian side wishes to drop down to the level of the Ministry of Defense. President Bush asked that General Foglesong seek clarification of the Russian position. President Bush believes it is important to stay on the same path at the Presidential level. Foglesong invited Vinokurov to present his ideas on a strategy to move forward. The general added that he has spoken with the U.S. commissioners, who are ready to engage as soon as they know who will be their counterparts on the Russian side. He emphasized to Vinokurov that the U.S. side sees the work of the Joint Commission as bilateral, and, whenever the U.S. side finds information in Iraq or Afghanistan, it will pass that information along to the Russian side.

The U.S. Chairman noted the importance of active participation from both the MFA and the State Department in achieving these objectives. He went on to accept the Russian proposal for a U.S.-drafted statement that would underscore the importance of the Commission's work and provide the basis for the legal standing required if the Russian side is to be a viable entity. He further undertook to have the statement signed and released at the highest possible level

General Kirilin then offered comment on specific points of interest. The first concerned the anticipated issuance of the Presidential decree said to have been ready for publication a year ago and intended to define the scope of the Russian side's functions and membership. Supposedly initialed by all necessary parties and ready for release, the decree is awaiting President's return from vacation. Once promulgated, it will allow the Russian side to re-establish the four working groups comprising the Commission's key areas of inquiry and, hopefully, foster the process of setting goals and priorities. On a second issue of keen interest to U.S. Commissioners and staff, Kirilin offered to prepare a document that would soon allow RADM Boris Novyy the credentials needed to resume his research in Russian archives on the behalf of U.S. Cold War losses.

Summing up the session in a colorful phrase, General Foglesong noted that "we are in violent agreement." He underscored that the U.S. side wishes to provide as much assistance as possible and is grateful for the help of the Russian side. To keep the momentum going, Foglesong suggested a two-pronged approach: At the tactical level, the U.S. side will provide data when found in Afghanistan and Iraq to help bring closure to Russian families. The U.S. side asks for the same level of cooperation received in the past and for help in gaining access to Russian archival records. At the strategic level, the U.S. side will expedite a letter asking that we legalize the oral agreement of our two presidents.

The meeting was then adjourned.

**Meeting with General-Lieutenant Ruslan Sultanovich Aushev
CIS Committee for Warrior-Internationalists
September 27, 2006**

Representing the U.S. Side:

General Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong
Mr. Norman Kass
LTC Michael O'Hara
LtCol Timothy Hall
Mr. Henry Eastman

Representing the Russian Side:

General-Lieutenant Ruslan Sultanovich Aushev

Dr. Vladimir Nikolaevich Snegirov

Mr. Petr Vasil'evich Kerzhimankin

Mr. Rashid Akhmetovich Karimov

Participating as the Commission's Cold War Working Group's Analyst:

RADM Boris Gavrilovich Novyy

Summary of Discussion

Following an exchange of pleasantries, General Aushev invited General Foglesong to a meeting with representatives of the Russian and Western media. In a brief session designed to underscore the cooperative relationships that have developed between the Joint Commission and veterans' service organizations, Foglesong presented to his host 500 DNA kits as a gift from three American veterans' support groups: Rolling Thunder, VietNow, and the National Vietnam Veterans Foundation. Aushev thanked the U.S. Chairman for the thoughtfulness of the gift and the generosity of those who donated it, noting the importance which he and his fellow veterans ascribe to the Commission and its work.

At a session in Aushev's office immediately following the press conference, Foglesong noted that the main reason for his visit was to help re-energize the Joint Commission. There is a sense in Washington, DC, he offered, that the Joint Commission's level of effort has slowed considerably over the past two years. In part, Foglesong observed, this results from the lengthy process required to designate a chairman. But there have been significant delays on the Russian side as well, he opined. Foglesong emphasized that President Bush had designated him as the U.S. Chairman with the expectation that he would provide a result-oriented, pro-active strategy by which the Commission could continue its good work. Both countries agree in principle that re-invigorating the Commission is an important objective. He asserted that we must do all we can to succeed and not allow bureaucratic encumbrances in either country to stymie our efforts. Turning to the Russian side, he stressed the need to resolve the issue of establishing a legal basis upon which we can launch our initiatives. The approach he advocated to Aushev was multifaceted: on a strategic level, promulgating a set of by-laws and a list of the Russian membership; on a tactical level, adhering to our current commitment to share intelligence and other data beneficial to clarifying the fates of our missing servicemen. Amplifying on this point, Foglesong noted his concern that delay by the Russian side in issuing terms of reference may well cause us to forfeit valuable opportunities that would help us account for U.S. and Russian servicemen and bring long-awaited comfort and a sense of closure to their families. We must persevere if we are to reach our goals, be they at the strategic or tactical level. Our intentions are good,

he observed, but our actions will ultimately be the indicators by which our work will be judged.

General Aushev agreed with the U.S. Chairman. He lamented that one cannot eliminate a bureaucracy and observed that neither bureaucrats nor their relatives participate in combat and, therefore, have themselves not experienced the meaning of tragic loss. To illustrate his point, Aushev cited a Presidential Commission on POW/MIAs set up by Presidential decree in 1997. The majority of its work concerned MIAs from the war in Chechnya. Last year, he noted, the Commission's status was reduced to that of an Interagency Commission. Aushev expressed his doubts that the Commission is engaged in any activity at all. Aushev's own work falls under the umbrella of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). He expressed his interest in an active, fully functioning U.S.-Russia Joint Commission and a role for his own organization in the Commission's activities. Aushev volunteered that the Joint Commission's work should be organized along the same lines used by veterans' service groups and suggested that the issue of closer cooperation regarding the Commission's work be raised by our Presidents at G8 meetings.

General Foglesong noted his concern about the diminution in the Commission's status since its transfer from the Presidential Administration to the Ministry of Defense. On the U.S. side, President Bush elected to keep the Joint Commission at his level. One reason for General Foglesong's trip was to ascertain the level of support for the Commission. He noted that, if President Bush and President Putin think something is important, it will receive the prompt attention it requires.

Aushev agreed with General Foglesong on the basis of past experience: under former President Gorbachev he had been selected as a committee chairman. Because of the Presidential imprimatur, all issues, including financial ones, were easily resolved. Expanding on this point, Aushev remarked that funding for his Committee of Warrior-Internationalists now comes under medical and social programs, with no coverage available to search for MIAs. He again suggested that our two Presidents discuss mutual assistance on POW/MIA issues, a point which the U.S. Chairman said he would pursue.

On the matter of access to pertinent records, Aushev observed that the Ministry of Defense is effectively disengaged, even with regard to incidents involving downed pilots from the 1950s and 60s. If the work were at the Presidential level, then all information would be provided, Aushev asserted. He went on to say that Russia is a country of military conservatives who believe that tragic events from the 1950s and 60s, when soldiers were lost, should be kept secret. Aushev cited the loss of the Kursk submarine and her crew as an example of how such excessive secrecy results in tragic consequences. He noted that in October 2006, there will be a meeting of the heads of the CIS at which he will present a report about the issues of interest to our Commission.

Foglesong stated that many of the people we associate with never had to go to a family and explain why their loved one would not return. He and General Aushev have done this and, therefore, understand how important it is to bring closure to these families.

Mr. Kass then presented General Aushev with a summary report on Badaber uprising, two propaganda DVDs concerning Russian losses in Chechnya, and information on a downed Soviet helicopter in Afghanistan, the same materials as those presented to General Shamanov.

The meeting was then adjourned and the formal portion of the visit concluded.